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But there is still another way of manufacturing artificial gems; and to make our article complete, we must finish with a short notice of it. Our clever allies across the channel have a credit of discovering and practising it with no small advantage to themselves. Just outside the Barrière du Trône, at Paris, stands a large factory, where a species of sand, brought from the Forest of Fontainebleau is converted into emerald, topaz, sapphire, and ruby. Artificial pearls are also produced in great numbers, and as they are lined with fish scales, an active fishery of roach and dace is kept up in the Seine during the spring months, when the fish are in their prime. But it is for the manufacture of diamonds that the factory is most celebrated—diamonds that deceive the eye of everybody but the maker. Thomas Carlyle has given us, among his *Essays*, a story concerning *The Diamond Necklace*, which lets us into the secret of a stupendous fraud, successfully accomplished before the very eyes of royalty; and if we could get at the history of the transactions of this diamond factory, we should find the fraudulent business still lively. Many have been deceived who never found out the cheat put upon them; others have discovered it to their sorrow. We give one instance from among many, borrowed from a contemporary.

"A few years ago, an English lady entered the shop belonging to the proprietor of the factory, situate on the Boulevard, looking rather flushed and excited, and drawing from her muff a number of morocco cases of many shapes and sizes, opened them one after another, and spread them on the counter.

"I wish," she said, "to inquire the price of a *parure* to be made in exact imitation of this; that is, if you can imitate the workmanship with sufficient precision for the distinction never to be observed."

M. B—— examined the articles attentively, assessed their price, and gave the most unequivocal promise that the *parure* should be an exact counterpart of the one before him. The lady insisted again. She was urgent, even much, as is the case with the fair sex in general. Was he sure the imitation would be perfect? Had he observed the beauty and purity of these stones? Could he imitate the peculiar manner in which they were cut, &c.

"Soyez tranquille, madame," replied M. B——; "the same workman shall have the job, and you may rely on having an exact counterpart of his former work."

The lady opened her eyes in astonishment and alarm; and M. B—— added, by way of reassuring her: "I will attend to the order myself, as I did when I received the commands of Milor ———, who ordered this very *parure*, I think, last February," and with the greatest unconcern, he proceeded to search his ledger, to ascertain which of his workmen made it, and the date of its delivery. Meanwhile, the lady had sunk down in a swoon. The milor named by the tradesman was no other than her own treacherous lord and master, who had forestalled her, by exchanging Randall and Bridge's goodly work against M. B——'s deceptive counterfeit, no doubt to liquidate his obligations on the turf. The vexation of the lady on recovering from her fainting-fit may be imagined; she reproached the diamond-maker with having assisted her husband in deceiving her, and retired mortified at the idea that she herself had never detected the difference between the false and the real. Many times had she worn the glittering gems, believing them to be the same she had brought in her casket from England."

We have heard it said, that many of the snuff-boxes given away as marks of royal or imperial favor are adorned with diamonds made in M. B——'s factory; and that Mehemet Ali, the late Pacha of Egypt, was the first to give away the costly looking shams. If this be true, it would only be fair to expose the mighty

personages, as well as cheating grocers. Let the recipients of snuff-boxes and diamond-rings see to it. A mock tiara, that may be bought for 600 francs, will look as well as a real one worth £1,000. What, then, shall be said of minor articles?

Correspondence.

PARIS, November 27, 1855.

As I advised you in my last letter, the distribution of awards obtained by artists at the close of the great exhibition, took place formally on the 15th November. The government neglected nothing in order to render this ceremony the most imposing possible. The emperor presided at the assembly; and he bestowed, with his own hand, upon a certain number of artists, the medals and decorations allotted to them.

The list of awards is too long, also containing too many unknown names, to send you *ad extenso*. I will confine myself to designating the most important. Let us begin by stating that M. Ingres has been appointed grand-officer of the Legion of Honor, an exceptional mark of distinction, with which neither painters nor sculptors are scarcely ever favored. Eugene Delacroix and Gudin have received commanders' crosses; the grade of officer is bestowed upon Cabat, Calamatta, Heim, Henriquel Dupont, Maréchal, and the two sculptors Barye, and the Prussian Ranch. The list of chevaliers is longer: it is composed first of twenty-four painters, as follows:

A. Benouville.
Bida.
Cabanel.
Eastlake.
Ed. Frère.
Fournier.
Glaize.
Gérôme.
Gendron.
Genod.
Hamon.
Hildebrandt.

Jalabert.
Jedroun.
Kacbach.
Loubon.
Adolphe Leleux.
Madou.
Mulready.
Pollet.
Steinle.
Rideman.
Vetter.
Wylid.

One engraver only, Caron, has been honored with this distinction; there are two architects, Cockerell and Zanth; the sculptors have obtained eight crosses among them, Bonassieux, Guillaume, Gibson, Lanno, and Richtel.

These decorations, you are aware, emanate directly from the government. *L'Administration des Beaux Arts* reserved to itself the privilege of recompensing artists not so much on account of their works exposed in the exhibition, as in consideration of the efforts and success of their whole lives. Medals have accordingly been appropriated upon the suggestion of the International Jury, who voted secretly upon each name, keeping in sight, however, the merit of the works exposed.

In PAINTING, ten large medals of honor have been given, to

Cornelius.
Decamps.
Eug. Delacroix.
Heim.
Henriquel Dupont.*

Ingres.
Landsaer.
Leys.
Meissonnier.
H. Vernet.

Medals of the first class number forty-

eight. They have been bestowed upon the following artists:

Abel de Pujol.
Achenbach.
Bida.
Mlle. Rosa Bonheur.
Brassacast.
Couture.
Cabanel.
Calame.
Calamatta.
Cattermole.
Chenavard.
Cogniet.
Corot.
Dauzats.
Hippolyte Flandrin.
Forster.
François.
Grant.
Gordoy.
Gudin.
Hébert.
Madame Herbelin.
Hockert.
Paul Huet.

Isabey.
Jalabert.
Knaus.
Kaulbach.
Larivière.
Leslie.
H. Lehmann.
Maréchal.
Charles Müller.
Mouilleron.
Madrazo.
Robert F'eury.
Robinson.
Rauget.
Theo. Rousseau.
Roguelan.
Henri Scheffer.
Schnetz.
Stanfield.
Tryon.
Tideman.
Thornburn.
Willems.
Winterhalter.

The medals of the second and third classes are more numerous; as to "honorable mention," it is about as easy to count them as it is the stars in the heavens on a summer night. You will admit, that with such an extensive list, I cannot give it entire. Sufficient to say that the American artists, Messrs. Healy and Rossiter, have obtained the first, a medal of the second class; and the second, a medal of the third class. Mr. William Hunt is overlooked, and it is not just that he should be so.

In SCULPTURE, four large medals of honor have been awarded to Dumont, Duret, Rietschell, and Rude. This last-named, a skillful statuary, and one justly celebrated, died a few days before the distribution of awards. I abstain from mentioning the medals of the second class.

In ARCHITECTURE, large medals of honor to Barry, the English architect, and to Dubars, the restorator of the Chateau de Blois.

The result is very unsatisfactory, and it will, doubtless, call forth many criticisms, for it is evident that artists of very inferior merit have been ranked among the first. Who will ever admit, for example, that Winterhalter is a genuine portrait painter,—an artist to be placed by the side of Rousseau, Cattermole, or Corot? The distinction granted to Madrazo is evidently a piece of international courtesy. I might cite other singular decisions, and point out positive mistakes. The truth is, that, in these delicate matters, the judgment of contemporaries is always more or less sullied by ignorance and feeling, and the future alone can impartially decide upon the reputation of all. P. MANTZ.

THE most correct taste is not that which is satisfied only with the even and elaborate structures of Art, but that which relishes the wild, flowing, and beautiful, though often irregular, outlines of nature. Give us the craggy rocks and the lofty mountain, though we take with them the storm and the avalanche, rather than confine us to the dreary and monotonous, though secure level of the plain. To be sure, writers may abuse the freedom of nature, and there is danger that liberty may degenerate into license; but it is better, to run the hazard of an occasional shock to our taste than to endure the silent and eternal gnawings of ennui.—*North American Review*.